

AT A MEETING of the Cabinet of HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the Castle on 6 FEBRUARY 2015.

Chairman:
p Councillor Roy Perry

Councillors:

p	Keith Chapman	p	Mel Kendal
p	Peter Edgar	p	Keith Mans
p	Liz Fairhurst	p	Stephen Reid
p	Andrew Joy	p	Seán Woodward

Also present with the agreement of the Chairman: Councillors J. Bennison, R Bolton, J. England, K. Evans, C. Lagdon, A. McNair-Scott, A. Gibson, P. Stallard, E. Still and S. Wheale

119. BROADCASTING ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chairman announced that the meeting was being recorded for broadcast on the County Council's website and would be available for repeated viewing. The press and members of the public were also permitted to film and broadcast this meeting. Those remaining at the meeting were consenting to being filmed and recorded, and to the possible use of those images and recording for broadcasting purposes.

120. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

All Cabinet Members were in attendance.

121. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest and, having regard to Part 3, Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Personal Interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered, having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 4 of the Code, whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

Councillor Gibson declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item 7 on the agenda (Capital Programme) and indicated that he would leave the meeting for that item.

122. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

123. DEPUTATIONS

No deputations.

124. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed all to the first Cabinet meeting of 2015 and in particular Councillor Lagdon to his first Cabinet meeting as leader of the UKIP Group and Councillor England, leader of the Independent Group.

Attention was drawn to a recent address to the Health and Wellbeing Board on the issue of mental health and the links to physical health and financial anxiety and the importance of tackling these for the wider benefit of Hampshire.

The Chairman reported on several recent conversations with Government Ministers, which had, in particular, resulted in an additional £0.5 million to support Adult Social Care and Hampshire's involvement in a forthcoming open data event.

125. REVENUE BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2015/16

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources (item 6 in the Minute Book) regarding proposals for the revenue budget and precept for 2015/16.

The report was introduced in the context of a £30 million reduction in Government grant and continual pressure on resources and infrastructure. The three priorities of supporting the taxpayers of the area, the service users and County Council staff were set out. It was explained that the Council's reserves, although appearing high were largely earmarked for spend and it was confirmed that Cabinet had no intention of pursuing speculative investments with the remaining resources.

An update, confirming the finalised grant figures was tabled and the key points of the report was outlined, with particular attention being drawn to the pressures on Adult and Children's social care. It was noted that the final grant was lower than expected and the impact of this and of the finalised figures was explained.

Cabinet welcomed the report, noting that the trend of reduced funding for Local Government was likely to continue and agreeing that either increasing Council Tax or using reserves was not a sensible option in the circumstances. The recent Local Government pay award was highlighted and it was noted that as a result of the success of transforming Hampshire County Council to being a provider of services, there had been a net increase of 219 staff during the year. Members were also pleased to note that despite the financial pressures, the County Council continued to provide some excellent leisure services, such as the outdoor centres.

The recommendations set out in the report were considered and agreed. The decision record is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 1.

126. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2015/16 – 2017/18

[Councillor Gibson withdrew from the meeting]

The Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Executive (item 7 in the Minute Book) setting out for approval the proposed capital programme for 2015/16 to 2017/18 of £543 million.

The scale of the Capital Programme and a number of its key details and investments were set out including: broadband, extra-care housing and the roads maintenance programme. The school building programme was also highlighted and the County Council's ability to respond so comprehensively to increased pressure for school places was welcomed.

The recommendations within the report were proposed and agreed. The decision record is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 2.

127. CONSULTATION POLICY

The Cabinet considered a report of the Chief Executive (item 8 in the Minute Book) regarding the principles for carrying out consultations.

The key points of the proposed policy were highlighted to Members and the work of the Policy and Resources Select Committee in its formulation was recognised. Cabinet was supportive of taking the views of others into account before reaching decisions, although it was also noted that the approach to consultation should be proportionate and balanced with Executive Members' responsibility to take decisions that may occasionally be difficult.

The recommendations within the report were proposed and agreed. The decision record is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 3.

128. HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S RURAL DELIVERY STRATEGY

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services and the Director of Economy Transport and Environment (item 9 in the Minute Book) regarding progress achieved in delivering the County Council's Rural Delivery Strategy since Cabinet's approval of revised priorities in March 2014, and to set out a three year financial strategy.

The main features of the Strategy were explained and the details of a pilot project, and a number of transport initiatives were noted. The Strategy would also seek to support village shops and reduce levels of rural isolation.

The recommendations within the report were proposed and agreed. The decision record is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 4.

129. REVISED PETITION SCHEME

The Cabinet considered the report of the Monitoring Officer (item 10 in the Minute Book), regarding proposed changes to the County Council's Petition Scheme.

It was explained that the proposed amendments to the Petition Scheme were to make it more effective and more user friendly, on the basis of the experience of administering it.

The recommendations within the report were proposed and agreed. The decision record is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 5.

130. NEW REGULATIONS FOR PENSION FUND GOVERNANCE

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Corporate Resources – Corporate Services (item 11 in the Minute Book) regarding the County Council's proposed approach to the implementation of the new Local Government Pension Scheme regulations.

Cabinet heard that changes in the finalised Regulations issued by the Government had opened up the opportunity to fulfil the responsibilities of a Pension Board through the existing Pension Fund Panel, with the approval of the Secretary of State. It was noted that many of the features required of a Pension Board were already in place in Hampshire's Pension Fund Panel and therefore the approval of the Secretary of State would be sought in time to meet the deadlines set out in the legislation.

The recommendations within the report were proposed and agreed. The decision record is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 6.